

**Text of Proposed Amendments to
California Code of Regulations, Title 18, Section 1699**

1699. Permits.

(a) Seller's Permit In General - Number of Permits Required. Every person engaged in the business of selling (or leasing under a lease defined as a sale in Revenue and Taxation Code section 6006(g)) tangible personal property of a kind the gross receipts from the retail sale of which are required to be included in the measure of the sales tax, and only a person actively so engaged, is required to hold a seller's permit for each place of business in this state at which transactions relating to sales are customarily negotiated with his or her customers. For example, a seller's permit is required for a branch sales office at which orders are customarily taken or contracts negotiated, whether or not merchandise is stocked there.

No additional permits are required for warehouses or other places at which merchandise is merely stored and which customers do not customarily visit for the purpose of making purchases and which are maintained in conjunction with a place of business for which a permit is held; but at least one permit must be held by every person maintaining stocks of merchandise in this state for sale. However, permits are required for warehouses or other places at which merchandise is stored and from which retail sales of such merchandise negotiated out-of-state are delivered or fulfilled.

If two or more activities are conducted by the same person on the same premises, even though in different buildings, only one seller's permit is required. For example, a service station operator having a restaurant in addition to the station on the same premises requires only one seller's permit for both activities.

(b) Persons Selling in Interstate Commerce or to United States Government. A seller's permit is not required to be held by persons all of whose sales are made exclusively in interstate or foreign commerce but a seller's permit is required of persons notwithstanding all their sales (or leases under a lease defined as a sale in Revenue and Taxation Code section 6006(g)) are made to the United States or instrumentalities thereof.

(c) Persons Selling Feed. Effective April 1, 1996, a seller's permit is not required to be held by persons whose sales consist entirely of sales of feed for any form of animal life of a kind the products of which ordinarily constitute food for human consumption (food animals), or for any form of animal life not of such a kind (nonfood animals) which are being held for sale in the regular course of business, provided no other retail sales of tangible personal property are made.

If a seller of hay is also the grower of the hay, this exemption shall apply only if either:

1. The hay is produced for sale only to beef cattle feedlots or dairies, or
2. The hay is sold exclusively through a farmer-owned cooperative.

(d) Concessionaires. For the purposes of this regulation, the term concessionaire is defined as an independent retailer who is authorized, through contract with, or permission of, another retail

business enterprise (the prime retailer), to operate within the perimeter of the prime retailer's own retail business premises, which to all intents and purposes appear to be wholly under the control of that prime retailer, and to make retail sales that to the general public might reasonably be believed to be the transactions of the prime retailer. Some indicators that a retailer is *not* operating as a concessionaire are that he or she:

- Appears to the public to be a business separate and autonomous from the prime retailer. Examples of businesses that may appear to be separate and autonomous, while operating within the prime retailer's premises, are those with signs posted on the premises naming each of such businesses, those with separate cash registers, and those with their own receipts or invoices printed with their business name.
- Maintains separate business records, particularly with respect to sales.
- Establishes his or her own selling prices.
- Makes business decisions independently, such as hiring employees or purchasing inventory and supplies.
- Registers as a separate business with other regulatory agencies, such as an agency issuing business licenses, the Employment Development Department, and/or the Secretary of State.
- Deposits funds into a separate account.

In cases where a retailer is not operating as a concessionaire, the prime retailer is *not* liable for any tax liabilities of the retailer operating on his or her premises. However, if a retailer is deemed to be operating as a concessionaire, the prime retailer may be held jointly and severally liable for any sales and use taxes imposed on unreported retail sales made by the concessionaire while operating as a concessionaire. Such a prime retailer will be relieved of his or her obligation for sales and use tax liabilities incurred by such a concessionaire for the period in which the concessionaire holds a seller's permit for the location of the prime retailer or in cases where the prime retailer obtains and retains a written statement that is taken in good faith in which the concessionaire affirms that he or she holds a seller's permit for that location with the Board. The following essential elements must be included in the statement in order to relieve the prime retailer of his or her liability for any unreported tax liabilities incurred by the concessionaire:

- The seller's permit number of the concessionaire
- The location for which the permit is issued (must show the concessionaire's location within the perimeter of the prime retailer's location).
- Signature of the concessionaire
- Date

While any statement, taken timely, in good faith and containing all of these essential elements will relieve a prime retailer of his or her liability for the unreported sales or use taxes of a concessionaire, a suggested format of an acceptable statement is provided as Appendix A to this regulation. While not required, it is suggested that the statement from the concessionaire contain language to clarify which party will be responsible for reporting and remitting the sales and/or use tax due on his or her retail sales.

In instances where the lessor, or grantor of permission to occupy space, is not a retailer himself or herself, he or she is not liable for any sales or use taxes owed by his or her lessee or grantee. In instances where an independent retailer leases space from another retailer, or occupies space by virtue of the granting of permission by another retailer, but does not operate his or her business within the perimeter of the lessor's or grantor's own retail business, such an independent retailer is not a concessionaire within the meaning of this regulation. In this case, the lessor or grantor is not liable for any sales or use taxes owned by the lessee or grantee.

(e) Agents. If agents make sales on behalf of a principal and do not have a fixed place of business, but travel from house to house or from town to town, it is unnecessary that a seller's permit be obtained for each agent if the principal obtains a permit for each place of business located in California. If, however, the principal does not obtain a permit for each place of business located in California, it is necessary for each agent to obtain a seller's permit.

(f) Inactive Permits. A seller's permit may only be held by a person actively engaged in business as a seller of tangible personal property. The Board may revoke a seller's permit where it finds that the person holding the permit is not actively engaged in business as a seller of tangible personal property.

(1) Any person who holds a seller's permit but is not actively engaged in business as a seller of tangible personal property shall promptly surrender the permit by notifying the Board to cancel it.

(2) Except as explained in paragraph (3) of this subdivision, a person holding a seller's permit will be held liable for any taxes, interest, and penalties incurred, through the date on which the Board is notified to cancel the permit, by any other person who, with the permit holder's actual or constructive knowledge, uses the permit in any way. For example, a permit holder may be held liable for tax, interest, and penalty actually incurred by his or her transferee where the transferee displays the permit in his or her place of business, or uses the permit number on a resale certificate, or files sales and use tax returns under the permit number. The permit holder has the burden of establishing that the Board received notice to cancel the permit.

(A) The seller's permit holder may notify the Board by delivering the actual seller's permit to the Board with the clear request that the permit be canceled. Where the reason for cancellation is that the permit holder transferred the business, the permit holder should identify the name and address of the transferee at the time the permit is surrendered to the Board. The permit holder may also notify the Board by delivering a written statement or email to the Board that the permit holder has transferred or otherwise

ceased the business, or will do so at a specified time, and requesting that the permit be canceled. The statement should identify the name and address of the transferee, if any. The permit holder may also provide this notice to the Board orally, but it will be presumed that such notice was *not* provided unless the Board's records reflect that the permit holder clearly notified the Board of the cessation or transfer of the business for which the permit was held.

(B) The Board will also be regarded as having received notice of cancellation of the seller's permit, and the permit holder will be excused from liability for the tax, interest, and penalty incurred by another person using the permit, as of the date the Board receives actual notice of transfer of the business for which the permit was issued. It will be presumed such notice was *not* received by the Board unless the Board's records reflect that the Board received a clear notice of the cessation or transfer of the business for which the permit was held. For example, the Board's receipt of an application for a seller's permit from the transferee constitutes sufficient notice if it contains adequate information to show that the application pertains to the same business for which the permit was held. Notice to another state agency of a transfer or cessation of a business does not constitute notice to the Board. Rather, the Board must itself receive actual notice of the transfer or cessation of business.

(3) Where the seller's permit holder does not establish that the Board received actual notice of the transfer of the business for which the permit was held and is thus liable for the taxes, interest, and penalties incurred by another person using that permit, that liability is limited to the quarter in which the business was transferred and the three subsequent quarters, and shall not include any penalties imposed on the other person for fraud or intent to evade the tax. However, these limitations (liability only for the quarter in which the business was transferred and the three subsequent quarters and no fraud or intent to evade penalty) do *not* apply where, after the transfer of the business, 80 percent or more of the real or ultimate ownership of that business is held by the permit holder. For these purposes, stockholders, bondholders, partners, or other persons holding an ownership interest in an entity are regarded as having the "real or ultimate ownership" of that entity.

(g) Non-issuance or Revocation of a Seller's Permit.

(1) The Board may refuse to issue a seller's permit to any person submitting an application for a seller's permit if the person has an outstanding final liability with the Board for any amount under the Sales and Use Tax Law. The Board may also refuse to issue a seller's permit if the person applying for it is not a natural person and is being controlled by a person with an outstanding final liability for any amount under the Sales and Use Tax Law.

(2) Natural Person - A "natural person" is a living human.

(3) Control and Controlling - For the purposes of this section and as defined in Section 22971 of the Business and Professions Code, the Board defines the words "control" and "controlling" to mean the possession, direct or indirect, of the power to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of a person. Evidence that a person controls or is

controlling another person may include, but is not limited to, the ownership of voting securities, by contract, other than a commercial contract for goods or nonmanagement services, or as otherwise provided below; however, no individual shall be deemed to control a person solely on account of being a director, officer, or employee of that person. It shall be a rebuttable presumption that a person has the power to control another person if any of the following apply:

(A) A person holds 25 percent or more of any class of the voting securities issued by a person; or

(B) A person is a general partner in a partnership, a managing member of a limited liability company, or president or director of a closely held corporation; or

(C) A person with an outstanding final liability as described in paragraph (g)(1) transfers the business to a non-natural person in a sale that was not at arm's length. A sale is presumed to be not at arm's length if it is between and among relatives (by blood or marriage, which relationships include, but are not limited to, spouses, parents, children and siblings). A transfer is among relatives if the person with the outstanding final liability is either a natural person who is a relative of the person or persons controlling the non-natural person acquiring the business, or is a non-natural person controlled by a relative or relatives of the person or persons controlling the non-natural person acquiring the business.

(4) A final liability will not be deemed to be outstanding for the purposes of this part if the person with the outstanding liability as described in paragraph (g)(1) has entered into a payment plan pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code section 6832 and remains in full compliance with it. If the person submitting an application for a seller's permit has entered into a payment plan as provided in this paragraph and fails to comply with the terms of the payment plan, the Board may seek revocation of the seller's permit obtained by the person pursuant to this section.

(5) The Board shall consider offers in compromise when determining whether to issue a seller's permit. If a seller's permit is conditioned on an offer in compromise being entered into, then a final liability will not be deemed outstanding for the purposes of this part, if the offer in compromise has been accepted by the Board and the person has paid the amount in full or remains in full compliance with the compromise plan. If the person submitting an application for a seller's permit has entered into an offer in compromise as provided in this paragraph and fails to comply with the terms of the offer in compromise, the Board may seek revocation of the seller's permit obtained by the person pursuant to this section.

(6) Whenever any person is denied a permit pursuant to this section, the Board shall give the person written notice of the denial. Any person denied a permit pursuant to this section may make a request for reconsideration by the Board, if submitted in writing within 30 days of the denial. A timely submitted written request for reconsideration shall afford the person a hearing in a manner that is consistent with a hearing provided for by Revenue and Taxation

Code section 6070. If a request for reconsideration is not filed within the 30-day period, the denial becomes final.

(gh) Due Date of Returns - Closeout of Account on Yearly Reporting Basis. Where a person authorized to file tax returns on a yearly basis transfers the business to another person or discontinues it before the end of the yearly period, a closing return shall be filed with the Board on or before the last day of the month following the close of the calendar quarter in which the business was transferred or discontinued.

(hi) Buying Companies - General

(1) Definition. For the purpose of this regulation, a buying company is a legal entity that is separate from another legal entity that owns, controls, or is otherwise related to, the buying company and which has been created for the purpose of performing administrative functions, including acquiring goods and services, for the other entity. It is presumed that the buying company is formed for the operational reasons of the entity which owns or controls it or to which it is otherwise related. A buying company formed, however, for the sole purpose of purchasing tangible personal property ex-tax for resale to the entity which owns or controls it or to which it is otherwise related in order to re-direct local sales tax from the location(s) of the vendor(s) to the location of the buying company shall not be recognized as a separate legal entity from the related company on whose behalf it acts for purposes of issuing it a seller's permit. Such a buying company shall not be issued a seller's permit. Sales of tangible personal property to third parties will be regarded as having been made by the entity owning, controlling, or otherwise related to the buying company. A buying company that is not formed for the sole purpose of so re-directing local sales tax shall be recognized as a separate legal entity from the related company on whose behalf it acts for purposes of issuing it a seller's permit. Such a buying company shall be issued a seller's permit and shall be regarded as the seller of tangible personal property it sells or leases.

(2) Elements. A buying company is not formed for the sole purpose of re-directing local sales tax if it has one or more of the following elements:

(A) Adds a markup to its cost of goods sold in an amount sufficient to cover its operating and overhead expenses.

(B) Issues an invoice or otherwise accounts for the transaction.

The absence of any of these elements is not indicative of a sole purpose to redirect local sales tax.

(ij) Web Sites. The location of a computer server on which a web site resides may not be issued a seller's permit for sales tax purposes except when the retailer has a proprietary interest in the server and the activities at that location otherwise qualify for a seller's permit under this regulation.

(j) Use Tax Permit - Qualified Purchasers. Except for the purchase of a vehicle, vessel, or aircraft, a person who meets all of the following conditions is required to register and report and pay use tax directly to the Board:

- (1) The person is not required to hold a seller's permit.
- (2) The person is not required to be registered pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code section 6226.
- (3) The person is not a holder of a use tax direct payment permit as described in Revenue and Taxation Code section 7051.3.
- (4) The person receives at least one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in gross receipts from business operations per calendar year.
- (5) The person is not otherwise registered with the board to report use tax.

The return must show the total sales price of the tangible personal property purchased by the qualified purchaser, the storage, use, or other consumption of which became subject to the use tax during the preceding calendar year, for which the qualified purchaser did not pay tax to a retailer required to collect the tax or a retailer the qualified purchaser reasonably believed was required to collect the tax. Notwithstanding Revenue and Taxation Code sections 6451, 6452, 6452.1, and 6455, the returns for the 2009 calendar year and subsequent years shall be filed with the Board, together with a remittance of the amount of the tax due, on or before April 15 of the succeeding calendar year.

Note: Authority cited: Section 7051, Revenue and Taxation Code. Reference: Sections 6066, 6067, 6070, 6070.5, 6071.1, 6072, 6073, 6075 and 6225, Revenue and Taxation Code.